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Editorial

Exploit and intensify the rifts within the AFP

The July 27 mutiny of 70 junior officers and more than 250 soldiers of the AFP is the most recent eruption in the reactionary ruling system's worsening political and economic crisis.

The deterioration of the rotten and reactionary semicolonial and semifeudal system has accelerated in the previous decade as a result of the country's complete subjugation to the policies of imperialist globalization and unbridled corruption in the civilian and military bureaucracy. Lately, it has deepened further because of the puppet regime's shameless advocacy of US military intervention and its obseqiousness to the US policy of aggression in Iraq and other parts of the globe.

The extreme rottenness of the puppet state and its mercenary army is the most crucial factor condemning junior officials and ordinary soldiers not just to demoralization and desperation. It also drove them to rebel on July 27 against the ruling regime and their military leaders. The mutineers resisted their use as instruments in the Arroyo regime's all-out terrorist war and the government and their military leaders' abandonment of their welfare.

The group that called itself "Magdalo" disclosed cases of pervasive corruption by highly placed military and civilian officials, the terrorism of the Arroyo regime that included masterminding bombings in Mindanao and the plan to impose martial law in the near future.

The Communist Party of the Philippines has sympathized with the rebels' legitimate grievances even as it foresaw that the uprising would not achieve anything meaningful. The mutineers issued a just call for the resignation of the puppet regime and the AFP leadership. Arroyo and Gen. Angelo Reyes must especially be made to account and pay for their all-out puppetry to the US, their fascist and terrorist crimes and their excessive corruption, repression and oppression of the people.

Demoralization among the AFP rank-and-file grows deeper and more widespread in the face of the continuing advance and intensification of the revolutionary armed struggle of the New People's Army (NPA) and the successive victories of its tactical offensives in various parts of the country.

The NPA is able to demonstrate more sharply the superiority of the strategy of protracted people's war and its guerrilla tactics which enjoys broad and deep mass support, over the AFP's oppressive strategy and tactics taught to them by foreigners and which isolates them from the masses. Out of the fascist state and the military bureaucracy's desperation to stem the further advance of the revolutionary movement, they impose harsh fascist repression on the people, and use junior officers and soldiers as cannon fodder.

The uprising showed that because of the Arroyo regime's excessive rottenness and isolation, even officials and soldiers of the AFP stand ready to repudiate it and rebel against its rule. At the height of the uprising, practically no one heeded the call of Cardinal Sin to gather at EDSA to support the regime.

The mutiny also starkly shows that infighting between the principal rival reactionary cliques that nurture factions within the military has reached the level of open antagonism. The rebellion was carried out along the lines of the "Last Revolution," a plan hatched in June by reactionaries from the Estrada and Honasan camp. The latter incited the coup attempt, used and funded it out of its desperation to seize power. However, because of the clique's own narrow interests, it could only gather a sprinkling of support for the mutiny launched by the protesting soldiers.

The deep factionalism and rifts within the ranks of the AFP are directly related to the political rivalry of opposing reactionary factions. Such factionalism first burst out in the open in 1986 along with the EDSA uprising against the US-Marcos dictatorship and in repeated coup attempts against the Aquino regime.

The current situation is favorable for revolutionary forces to work within the reactionary army. We must carefully plan this out and implement it through bold but cautious means.

We must especially encourage ordinary soldiers and paramilitary forces who were after all, also recruited from the ranks of the toiling masses, to repudiate the rotten system that they are forced to defend, and instead uphold the interests of the Filipino people. Let us find out what their grievances are even as we explain to them that their problems cannot be resolved through piecemeal reforms within the reactionary system or by launching coups d'état and other measures that are linked to the interests of reactionary politicians. The entire rotten system must be changed through revolutionary struggle.

We must expose the rottenness of the AFP, especially the corruption and self-indulgence of the big-bellied generals who sit at the top of the military bureaucracy. It is important to impart to junior officers and soldiers that the AFP's rottenness is linked to the rottenness of the ruling system they are made to defend. We must expose the mercenary tradition and the puppet orientation of the AFP and propagate patriotism among its ranks.

We must encourage junior officers and soldiers to form clandestine progressive and democratic groups that can carry out appropriate measures to assert their legitimate demands.

We must propagate the call for the surrender of soldiers already pinned down in fighting. We must let them know about the NPA's policy of lenient treatment towards surrenderees and wounded combatants. We must call on soldiers directly used in the counterrevolutionary war and repression of the people to disobey the orders of their own officials.

We must encourage junior officers and ordinary soldiers we have contacted and enlightened, to completely repudiate the reactionary, rotten and losing course of the AFP. We must persuade them to uphold the tradition of Lt. Crispin Tagamolila, join the people's struggle or link up and cooperate with the revolutionary movement in various ways.

Even as we carry out political work within the reactionary military, we must not lose sight of our basic outlook that it is an armed instrument of the reactionary state. We use political means of persuasion on individual soldiers and officials, together with advancing armed struggle as the

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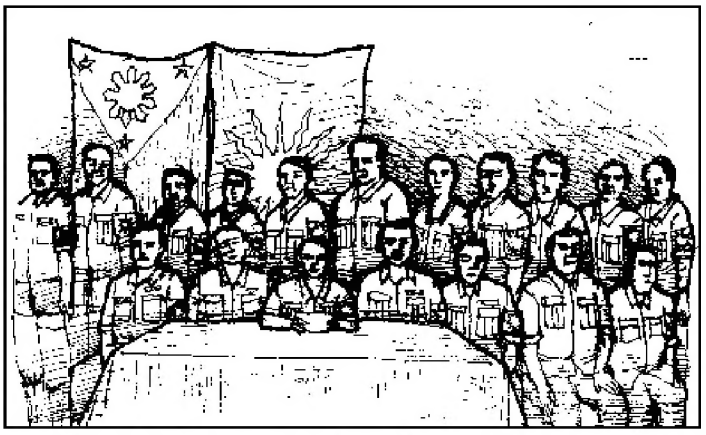
The regime is forcibly concealing the roots of the Makati mutiny



One day after the failed coup d'état, the Arroyo regime imprisoned and tried to gag all of the AFP officers and personnel involved. In order to stem the further exposure of the issues brought out by the soldiers in their mutiny, the regime tried to stop congress and senate investigations on the matter.

More than a week after the failed coup d'état, the state of rebellion used by Arroyo as the legal basis to arrest and imprison anyone involved in the failed adventurism and to persecute her political enemies, was still in place.

On August 4, the Arroyo regime filed rebellion charges against Sen. Gregorio Honasan, who has been accused of masterminding the failed July 27 coup. Had the coup succeeded, Honasan would have been installed as the president or leader of a junta they had planned to set up. It was Honasan's shallow and pretentious National Recovery Program (NRP) that the Magdalo group brandished in its attempt to establish a new government. Aside from the Magdalo group's use of Honasan's NRP, it has come to light that Honasan held a series of consultations with the rebel soldiers, and that Honasan provided some logistical support to them. Honasan had no choice but to go into hiding.

At the same time, the regime has stepped up operations against members of the Estrada camp who have been exposed as financiers of the mutinous AFP officers and incited them to rebel. Former Assistant Executive Secretary Ramon Cardenas, who served as a conduit of funds and who allowed his house and vehicles to be used by the Magdalo group, was arrested. The regime also implicated Estrada's sons JV Ejercito and Jinggoy Estrada, and Laarni Enriquez, one of Estrada's mistresses.

In the hope of concealing the issues behind the mutiny, Arroyo intentionally highlights the fact that the Magdalo group was merely used by her political enemies. However, no matter how much the Arroyo regime attempts a coverup, the truth of the soldiers' grievances cannot be denied.

Lt. SG Antonio Trillanes IV, leader of the rebel soldiers, has long attempted to expose corruption within the AFP—in particular, the Philippine Navy, to which he belongs. Two documents that he has written detail the extent of the systematic corruption in the Philippine Navy. In the first document he wrote in 2001, Trillanes detailed nine cases of corruption in the PN from 1995 to 1999. It included the involvement of PN officials in smuggling in Mindanao, theft of oil and gasoline from naval ships, and various cases of malversation of public funds. The second document written in 2002 detailed how the systematic corruption in the process of procuring supplies in the PN takes place. It cited the Naval Sea Systems Command and the Naval Logistics Center as

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principal form of struggle to defeat and destroy the enemy armed forces step-by-step.

In the face of the continuing and deepening rift within the AFP, we must continue intensifying the revolutionary armed struggle and conduct more frequent and stronger tactical offensives. The NPA can thus better exploit and exacerbate the turmoil and demoralization besetting AFP ranks.

We can expect further splintering among the ranks of the AFP due to the further worsening of the crisis of the ruling system, the intensification of political infighting, and the advance of our work within the reactionary army. At the same time, we can expect the eruption of various actions and protests, both big and small, by junior officers and soldiers, directly or indirectly linked to the political maneuvers of rival reactionary groups.

All this will bring about a favorable situation for the revolutionary forces to intensify the revolutionary armed struggle and operate within the reactionary army. These various measures will bring about the disintegration of the enemy armed forces and hasten revolutionary victory. AB

the most corrupt units of the PN. The source of his information was no other than the official records during his term as PN supply officer and papers from Philippine Navy suppliers.

Before Trillanes came forward, another Philippine Navy official had exposed the grave corruption in the PN. In December 2000, Rear Adm. Guillermo Wong exposed irregularities in the purchase of helmets for the Philippine Marines valued at P3.8 million. According to him, the price being paid for such low-quality helmets was too high.

Instead of seriously addressing the anomalies exposed by Trillanes and Wong, the regime's response has been to dish out threats, concoct schemes and offer bribes. Trillanes' life has been threatened several times since he wrote the two documents. Then AFP chief of staff Angelo Reyes, on the other hand, tried to bribe Wong by offering him the AFP Northern Command in exchange for his silence. Wong opted to leave the military.

Meanwhile, anomalies involving Reyes are slowly being brought to light. It has recently been revealed that Reyes's wife and sons bagged huge supply contracts from the AFP. Sen. Sergio Osmeña III has also disclosed that he has in his possession evidence pinning down Reyes in no less than eight cases of irregularity in the use of AFP funds. Despite all this, Reyes clings like a leech to his post.

The Magdalo group also disclosed that they had in their ranks those who were ordered by the high command to carry out the bombings in Davao City in March. ISAFP chief Victor Corpus' presence in Davao on the eve of the bombings had earlier been exposed. Corpus was forced to resign as ISAFP chief because of such revelations.

The regime has reason indeed to fear the widespread discontent of junior officers and the military rank-and-file. Only a few hundred officers and soldiers were directly involved in the mutiny, but they embodied the sentiments of several hundred thousand officers and soldiers nationwide. The regime itself has admitted that aside from the over 300 officers and soldiers that mutinied in Makati, there were hundreds of other AFP elements who had abandoned their units and were possibly aligned with the Magdalo group. The actions taken by the aggrieved soldiery will definitely not end with the Makati mutiny. It is likewise certain that the rival factions of the ruling class will take advantage of the soldiers' seething sentiments to seize power from the Arroyo faction.

The Arroyo regime will use the failed coup attempt as a pretext to impose repressive measures and eventually direct them against the legal democratic and progressive forces. The people must exercise vigilance and militantly oppose these measures. AB

SONA 2003, Arroyo's fantasy

"It's all fantasy...." "Sounds like she's talking about some other country...." These and similar reactions were expressed by the people regarding the paradise presented by Gloria Arroyo in her State of the Nation Address (SONA) on July 28. Her boastful claims of progress, stability and peace in the country were far divorced from reality.

Within two and a half years of Arroyo's term, the people's livelihood had steadily declined. The regime has not only been inutile in providing for the most basic needs of the majority. It has also taken the lead in exploiting and plundering the public treasury for the benefit of the Arroyo family and the most favored bureaucrat capitalists and comprador-bourgeoisie.

In her SONA, Arroyo failed to mention the latest leading economic indicators (LEI) for the start of the third quarter of 2003 released by the National Statistical Coordination Board. The LEI serves as the overall measuring stick for economic performance based on trade, the price and consumption of electricity, goods and stocks and the value of the peso, among others. The LEI

fell further from negative .079 during the second quarter to negative .096 in the third quarter. With the LEI measured before the Makati mutiny, it still does not reflect the rebellion's negative effects on the economy.

Arroyo likewise failed to mention that over 80% of the country's population lives in poverty. Thirty-five million Filipinos or more than 40% of the population lives on an income of less than P32 a day. In the United Nations Human Development Index for the year 2003, the Philippines' ranking fell down further from 77th to 85th place. The UN evaluation includes the quality of life, health, literacy and education levels, respect for human rights and other matters pertaining to the people's welfare.

The budget allotments for education, health and other basic services are dwindling. At the same time, the regime is furthering the privatization of public institutions to the detriment of the people who depend on them.

The country's unemployment rate is the highest in all of Asia. More than half of the labor force is either unemployed or underemployed. More than half of those employed do not receive regular wages and benefits. The number of those with regular employment is also declining as regular positions are replaced with contractual and irregular jobs. More and more Filipinos are forced to take their chances in search of gainful employment abroad. More than ten million Filipinos now work outside the country, with 3,000 adding to this number daily.

Since 2001, the Arroyo regime has rejected demands to raise the wages of workers and the salaries of civil employees of the government. The highest minimum daily wage is pegged at P280 even as the average family of six needs P558 a day to live decently. The Arroyo regime is forcibly prettifying its own poverty statistics by insisting that a daily wage of P162 is sufficient for a family of five to live on. Contrary to Arroyo's boastful claims, the prices of basic commodities and services have risen in the last three years while the real value of wages has fallen. According to the government's own statistics, the value of the Philippine peso now stands at a mere 58 centavos compared to 1994 levels.

Even worse, almost a third of the basic wage and salary now goes to electric bill payments. Arroyo has not only refused to put a stop to the purchased power adjustment (PPA), she has made things worse through the "unbundling of rates" or the separation of charges so as to avoid the people's ire being directed at her regime's inutility or the avarice of her patrons in Meralco. Water service costs have also increased. There have likewise been repreated oil price hikes.

The Arroyo regime's greed and corruption have exacerbated the people's suffering. The estimated P20 billion siphoned off by those in power annually is too small a figure. According to a survey, over 57% of private companies admit to dishing out bribes to land beneficial contracts. The practice of alloting a minimum of 20% of project expenses to bribe government officials persists.

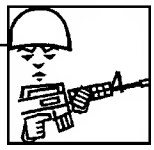
Arroyo and her underlings in Malacañang have entered into numerous anomalous contracts and agreements.

The regime's systematic plunder of the country's treasury, the growing budgetary allocation for the military and mounting government debt payments have aggravated government bankruptcy. It is estimated that the budget deficit will come to P263 billion by the end of the year. In 2002, the budget deficit exceeded by P82 billion the P130 billion target for the whole year.

Many of the leading government corporations have already been auctioned off at fire sale prices. Thus, additional borrowing has become the principal means of sustaining government operations. The debt has grown once more by 12.7% in the last twelve months and has now come to P2.96 billion. Public sector debts are now at more than P5 billion. Already exceeding 120% of the GDP, public debts continue to rise relentlessly especially since the government deficit and the necessary debt payments continue to increase.

The people are sick and tired of the Arroyo regime's empty statements and promises. The regime is extremely isolated from the people. Because it is so weak and with public resources available for plunder ever dwindling, the Arroyo regime's leading rival faction is in a hurry to grab power from it.

Despite all this, Arroyo clings stubbornly to power and all of its attendant privileges and bribes. Instead of using the latest SONA to bid farewell, what was apparent to most was her obsession to run in the 2004 polls. AB



Records of the US-Arroyo regime's human rights violations

Cases of human rights violations have increased and intensified ever since Pres. Gloria Arroyo unleashed her "war against terrorism" and her feigned war against illegal drugs nationwide.

According to KARAPATAN, a human rights watchdog, there have been 482 cases of human rights violations from January to June 2003. Compared to the 101 cases in 2002, there has been a 477% increase even before the year has ended.

In 2002, there were no less than 1,373 victims of human rights violations in Southern Mindanao. This year, there were up to 15,928 victims, representing a 1,160% increase compared to 2002 figures. Most of them are victims of food blockades (8,413) and forced evacuation (4,969). Not included in these numbers are the victims of the war against the MILF in Pikit, North Cotabato and the 191 cases of summary execution in Davao City of suspected drug pushers and users.

There is likewise a long list of human rights violations in the Bicol region. In Albay, there have been 11 recorded cases victimizing 22 individuals and two communities from January to April this year. In March, 18 cases were recorded in Camarines Sur and Camarines Norte victimizing 29 individuals and two communities. In Sorsogon, there were 23 cases and over 52 individual victims in February and the first week of March. These are aside from violations in villages where the military's Special Operations Team (SOT) has been launching operations.

The following are some of the cases of human rights violations not yet published in *AB:*

July 21. Elements of the 16th IB massacred five members of a Mangyan family in Sitio Talayog, Barangay San Nicolas, Magsaysay, Occidental Mindoro. They strafed the family's house until they killed the couple Olivia and Rogelio Blanco and their children, John Kevin, 3, and Dexter, 1. Olivia was eight months pregnant at the time. Olivia's sister Len-len Batikulin was wounded.

July 14. The Western Police District Special Weapons Action Team and guards from Intramuros violently dispersed a workers' picket in front of the Department of Labor and Employment in Intramuros, Manila.

July 12. Sgt. Edwin Bautista raped and killed a 16-year-old woman in Talubin, Bontoc, Mountain Province. The soldier shot the woman inside his own room in the barracks. The victim had been turned into a servant and sex slave in the soldiers' camp.

July 1. The military tortured then shot and killed Hever Ybañez of Barangay Pagsabangan, New Bataan Town, Compostela Valley.

The militarization of Barangay Pagsabangan by the 701st Infantry Brigade and the Scout Rangers is currently intense. A food blockade is being imposed, and the people severely terrorized and brutalized. A cannon pointed at a cluster of houses has been placed inside the school. Residents have been forced to evacuate.

First week of July. Within a week, the Davao Death Squad (DDS) killed up to 12 people in Davao City. The DDS is a clandestine vigilante group organized by Mayor Rodrigo Duterte to summarily execute suspected pushers and users of illegal drugs. After Arroyo announced her anti-drugs campaign, the number of DDS victims increased. From January to July 16, it summarily executed up to 73 victims.

June 17. For two hours, a hundred soldiers shot at a day care center, houses and crops in an Aeta community in Sitio Itanglew, Barangay San Rafael, San Marcelino, Zambales. Subsequently, the soldiers ransacked and burglarized the houses. They interrogated some of the victims about their supposed links with the NPA. When Aeta leaders reported the incident to Mayor Lydia Rodriguez of San Marcelino, she merely told them that the soldiers become hot-headed during operations. Some Aetas were forcibly recruited into the CAFGU.

June 7. Fulgencio Gabin, 70, of Barangay Gusa, San Jose de Buan, Samar was killed in a strike operation conducted by a platoon headed by Lt. Quigao from the 34th IB Alpha Coy. It was around 5 a.m. when Gabin was summoned from his house by a CAFGU element. He was taken to a nearby stream where he was shot and repeatedly stabbed. The military brazenly lied in saying that he was carrying a .38 revolver and documents.

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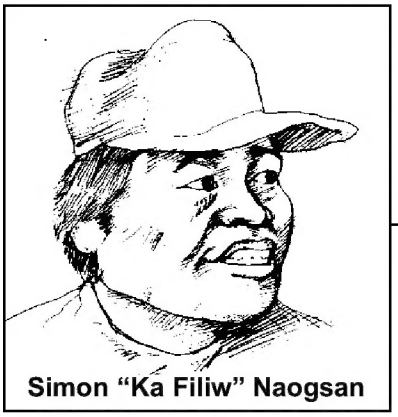
Simon "Ka Filiw" Naogsan

In the last week of July, AB *interviewed Cordillera People's Democratic Front (CPDF) spokesperson Simon "Ka Filiw" Naogsan in Mountain Province. He shared advances in revolutionary work in the Cordillera, particularly in the region's anti-CAFGU campaign. Part of the interview also covered Ka Filiw's disclosure of the issues behind the marijuana and hashish trade, where he pinpointed the military officials who benefit from it.*

Victories in dismantling the CAFGU in the Cordillera

The CAFGU (Civilian Armed Forces Geographical Unit) are the AFP's local armed minions used for intelligence work and the coercion and violent control of the local population. They play a critical role in the enemy's base denial efforts against the revolutionary movement.

Usually, it is elements of the CAFGU who are the most active counterrevolutionary elements in the locality. Most of them are lumpen elements who want to make quick money. The enemy intentionally incites CAFGU elements to commit fascist abuses so it can use mailed fist tactics and still manage to evade responsibility or have someone else to heap blame on—aside from the fact that the CAFGU are more driven to fight as contradictions between them and the local population and revolutionary movement grow.

Although we recognize, exacerbate and take advantage of the contradictions between the CAFGU and the regular units of the AFP, and we use political persuasion more with the former compared with the latter, the CAFGU are among the principal military tar-

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June. The military harassed legal organizations in Davao City by putting up a large billboard listing the names of militant organizations and their leaders. The organizations were maliciously accused of being CPP-NPA-NDFP fronts. On July 2, militants attempted to remove the billboard but were blocked by elements of the PNP and 72nd IB aboard a truck accompanied by an armored personnel carrier and a fire truck.

May 24. Two hundred armed soldiers and paramilitary forces led by a Capt. Torres staged a pre-dawn raid on a youth camp in Davao City. The fascists forcibly roused the youth aged 13-21 from their sleep while pointing their guns at them. The soldiers shouted at the youth as they were made to assemble, with soldiers rifling through their belongings. The assault lasted two hours. The soldiers carted away five cellphones, a tape recorder and a camera. The military also took video footages of the victims. The soldiers reasoned out that they received reports of the presence of armed terrorists in the youth camp.

The youth camp was conducted to help young victims of abuse and other negligence. Many of the victims were street children, child workers and prostituted children.

May. CAFGU elements under the 1st IB killed Abner Nario, 35 in his own home in Antipolo City.

Meanwhile, up to 200 Ata-Manobo were forced to evacuate when the Alamara threatened to kill them in the event of an NPA attack. Seventy of them were children. (The Alamara is a group formed by the military as a Civilian Volunteer Organization.) At present, over 500 Ata-Manobo families have been affected by the operations of the Alamara.

The 204th IB harassed members of the national fact-finding mission (NFFM) which went to Mindoro to investigate the murder last April 21 of Eden Marcellana and Eddie Gumanoy, leaders of legal organizations. Two military squads stood watch against members of the NFFM.

April 28. Two men shot to death Jun Villanueva Jr., 54, a broadcaster of DZGB-AM in Legazpi City. Before he was killed, the Philippine Army in Ligao City sent him an invitation to report to its headquarters. Villanueva did not heed the summons.

April 24. The military killed Leo "Ka Rey" Llarena, 23, who had been rendered hors de combat, in an encounter between the NPA and the military in Tastas, Ligao, Albay. They desecrated the corpse of martyred Red fighter Eddie "Ka Ted" Armenta, 18. Two other comrades were martyred in the encounter. AB

gets of the NPA. From the start, the revolutionary movement combats and prevents the recruitment and formation of CAFGU detachments. When they are formed, the NPA uses various means to crush, dismantle, disarm or expel them.

Particular to the Cordillera, we take into consideration traditional and communal relations, utilizing them as supplementary methods when we use political means to dismantle the CAFGU. We particularly take into consideration three important points:

Those who join the CAFGU come from the ranks of the national minorities being organized by the revolutionary movement. They experience intense poverty due to the lack of livelihood opportunities and neglect and oppression by the reactionary state. They usually join the CAFGU only so they could avail of the small allowance offered, and have no desire to fight the revolutionary movement.

The national minorities put a lot of importance to being part of their *ili* (indigenous community). They do not detach themselves from the *ili*. This is what shapes their identity as individuals. This indigenous custom is violated when some of them join the CAFGU.

The formation of CAFGU is also a violation by outsiders of the culture and socio-political institutions of the *ili*. Entities that enter the community are expected to respect the culture, processes, policies and welfare of the community. If not, they are considered enemies. For the national minorities, it is most important to maintain the unity of the *ili*. This includes the recognition of the socio-political authority of the *dap-ay* represented by the *lallakay*. Individuals that join the CAFGU separate themselves from the *ili* because they put themselves under the authority of the AFP and hence remove themselves from the authority of the *dap-ay*. Therefore, the national minorities of the Cordillera regard the AFP as an enemy because the latter does not respect the *dap-ay* and destroys the unity of the *ili*.

In these places, together with engaging contact CAFGU elements in direct dialogue and using persuasion, the NPA gives a lot of consideration to indigenous customs and institutions for the effective conduct of political work, which includes the destruction of the CAFGU. In this regard, the *lallakay* and *dap-ay* are a great help.

The *lallakay* entice those who have joined the CAFGU to bolt it and reunite with the community under the *dap-ay*. Their relatives who are activists or members of the revolutionary movement in the community also help in persuading them. According to Ka Filiw, because most CAFGU elements belong to the oppressed and exploited classes, they feel the poverty suffered by their class. They are persuaded to leave the CAFGU at an early stage to avoid being put in a compromising position and committing transgressions against the *ili* and the revolutionary movement. If they have already committed transgressions, they are encouraged to rectify their errors with their class and their *ili*. The revolutionary movement also explains to them that the allowance they receive is simply too meager for them to put their lives at risk and turn their backs on their clan and *ili*.

These efforts have already reaped successes, according to Ka Filiw.

At the minimum, elements of the CAFGU have been neutralized not to fight the revolutionary forces. But there are many cases where they link up with and meet the needs of the NPA and actively assist in its operations.

Withholding information about the revolutionary movement from their AFP cadremen and passing information to the NPA about the enemy's movements are just one means of helping. There have also been cases where they refused to join AFP military operations.

In some barrios in Mt. Province, there have been instances where entire units have been convinced to abandon the CAFGU. There are also cases where many CAFGU joined NPA tactical offensives using the weapons issued to them by the AFP. And there are others who have left the CAFGU and eventually joined the NPA. AB

CPLA factions killing each other

BUCLOC, Abra mayor Mailed Molina, the head of one of the factions of the Cordillera People's Liberation Army (CPLA), has accused the faction of the late Fr. Conrado Balweg of killing three of his people on July 28 in Manabo, Abra. Armed men killed Rommel Martinez, Hector Rosales and Hermi Tubban.

Prior to this, CPDF spokesperson Simon "Ka Filiw" Naogsan issued a statement saying that the CPLA factions' tug-of-war is all about vying for position and resources and promoting the self-interest of CPLA leaders. The latter include Molina, Lt. James Sawatang, Corazon Cortel (Balweg's widow), Gavino Ganggangan and Abrino Aydinan of the Department of Agrarian Reform.

Military and CPLA behind marijuana production and trade

The reactionary military and police forces feign seriousness in suppressing the drug business, but in truth, they are behind the proliferation of, and trading in, drugs and provide protection to drug syndicates in the Philippines.

In the Cordillera, no less than PNP Supt. Eugene Martin of Abra and Mailed Molina, mayor of Bucloc, Abra and head of one of the factions of the Cordillera People's Liberation Army (a counterrevolutionary paramilitary group) are partners in crime in the cultivation of marijuana and the sale of hashish.

Hashish is derived from processed marijuana flowers and fruits which are more potent than the leaves. It is also more expensive, especially since the bulk of the country's production is exported. In collusion with the regional and local AFP and PNP, the CPLA cultivates marijuana and has a factory for processing hashish in Tinglayan, Kalinga. Each CPLA plantation in the areas it controls comes to up to 15 hectares.

Some of the indigenous people are forced to cultivate marijuana because of the prodding and bribery of the military and their paramilitary accomplices like the CPLA, and because of the lack of opportunities to earn enough through honest means.

Military agents usually provide the contracted peasants with the seedlings. This is apart from the seedlings from previous plantings.

Marijuana grows on any soil and easily thrives on rocky and steep land and other terrain not favorable for agricultural production. Hence, it can easily be concealed in remote forests and steep hilltops rarely reached by people. Peasants do not tire much because after planting, they only have to wait for the marijuana plants to blossom before harvesting them.

Before harvest time, the plantations are "raided" by the PNP Anti-Narcotics Unit which is also in cahoots with drug syndicates. Photos of the burning of some plants are taken for the media, but the bulk of the "confiscated" marijuana has already been harvested and is being processed.

When the US military bases were still open, a certain US Army major was in charge of exporting hashish. Now, processing, packing and shipping are all being done in the Cordillera. From here, through the drug syndicates and with the protection of the PNP and AFP, the hashish is brought directly to Baguio, Olongapo or Manila before the bulk is exported and the rest plied to various parts of the country.

It is the military leaders assigned to Northern Luzon who benefit from the drug trade in the Cordillera.

Those now involved in the so-called "Baguio Connection" are Supt. Eugene Martin, Col. Ramsey Ocampo, Gen. Reynaldo Acop and Gen. Rogelio Aguana. Their man in Buguias, Benguet is Sgt. Arsenio Tomas who is untouchable despite common knowledge of his involvement with drugs. In Bakun, Benguet, Sgt. Henry Dayag is involved. He is also the rabid fascist who killed Fr. Nilo Valerio and three other martyrs of Bakun in 1985.

Meanwhile, in areas where the NPA operates in the Cordillera, marijuana cultivation is effectively suppressed. The Party, the NPA and the revolutionary mass organizations conduct a continuing campaign to convince peasants not to cultivate marijuana. They have since achieved huge successes, although there are still wide mountainous areas not yet within the scope of Red political power where plantations can still be found.

The NPA and the revolutionary movement's propaganda and education campaign has also been effective in reducing the number of cases of marijuana usage. The masses are well aware of the military's involvement in marijuana. They also know that the raids on marijuana plantations are just for show and

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Soldiers ambushed in Capiz

The sergeant team leader of a nine-man squad of the 12th IB undertaking a "recon" patrol was killed when the New People's Army (NPA) ambushed his unit in Barangay Abangay in Tapaz, Capiz on July 31. Another soldier was also wounded.

The soldiers are notorious for their abusiveness. A day before the ambush, the team confiscated seven dug-out canoes owned by peasants which they planned to sell in Roxas City.

NPA seizes 7 rifles in Camarines Sur raid

Seven M16s were confiscated when the NPA attacked the police outpost in Cabusao, Camarines Sur on July 25. Two 9 mm's, a VHF radio, magazines, ammunition and other military equipment were likewise seized. A policeman was killed and another wounded in the 15-minute firefight.

According to correspondence reports, the NPA was able to retreat safely even before enemy reinforcements could arrive. The Red fighters were cheerfully welcomed by the masses because of their successful tactical offensive.

NPA ambushes SOT in Abra

The New People's Army (NPA) Agustin Begnalen Command in Abra ambushed a composite force of the 17th IB and the 503rd Bde that comprised a special operations team (SOT) in Sitio Tapayen, Alaoa, Tineg, Abra. A soldier was killed while another was wounded in the ambush. The SOT was presently launching "Oplan Alaoa" when it was ambushed.

According to a statement by NPA-Abra spokesperson Ka Diego Wadagan, they punished the 17th IB because it served as a private army of the Benwaren family, a clan of warlord-politicians that has long ruled Tineg. The 17th IB "carries out terrorist attacks against people who do not agree with warlordism in Tineg," said Ka Diego. Ever since Oplan Alaoa was launched in March, 10 peasants accused of being NPA members have been charged with arson in relation to the burning down of a resort owned by the Benwaren family in November 2002.

CPP salutes Chairman Salamat Hashim

THE Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) expressed its condolences over the death on July 13 of Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) chairman Salamat Hashim. In a statement, CPP spokesperson Gregorio "Ka Roger" Rosal saluted Chairman Salamat for unstintingly serving the Moro people all his life and for his "millitancy and revolutionary leadership." Under his leadership, the Moro people's armed struggle gained renewed vigor, advanced, and successfully thwarted the reactionary government's attempt to crush the MILF by military means or to use the peace talks as a way to effect its surrender.

Salamat Hashim was very open to the formation of the national revolutionary united front of the NDFP and the MILF. The alliance of the two revolutionary organizations became formal in 1999, but it had already existed for over two decades.

At the same time, the CPP welcomed Al Haj Murad's succession to the post vacated by the late Salamat Hashim. "We also consider him a friend and ally," said Ka Roger. "We are confident that Chairman Murad will continue Chairman Salamat's brilliant work," and "we foresee the continuing positive relationship and cooperation between the CPP-NPA-NDFP and the MILF-BIAF," added Ka Roger.

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are being used as an excuse to militarize their areas.

Small-time minions are encouraged to bolt the criminal syndicates and their anti-social activities. The people's army and revolutionary movement pursue and fight the military and paramilitary forces and the syndicates that are principally behind the marijuana trade.

Through agrarian revolution, the revolutionary mass organizations strive to develop agricultural production to meet the livelihood needs of the people. The units of the people's army vigorously help in this endeavor. The agrarian revolution program includes cooperative production, the development of means of cultivating and propagating traditional plant varieties and alternative products and introducing other sources of income. AB

Sulpicio Lines workers win strike

WORKERS of Sulpicio Lines won a two-day strike launched July 29-30. The strike led by the Unyon ng Mandaragat sa Sulpicio Shipping and Solid Towage and Litherage halted the voyages of 24 out of Sulpicio Lines' 27 passenger and cargo ships. The union was able to put a stop to the illegal termination of workers. The union also put a stop to the powerful role played by the yellow Associated Labor Union-Trade Union Congress of the Philippines (ALU-TUCP) in firing workers.

The Kilusang Mayo Uno-Alliance of Nationalist Genuine Labor Organizations (KMU-ANGLO) and the Professional Solidarity for Social Concerns supported the strike. The bulk of those who launched the work stoppage came from the 900 employees of Pier 12, North Harbor in Tondo, Manila. Workers in Cebu City, Tacloban, Ormoc and Cagayan de Oro followed through with their own mass actions.

Nestlé picket line violently attacked

STRIKING workers of Nestlé Philippines in Cabuyao, Laguna strongly condemned the intensifying attacks on their ranks by capitalists, labor agencies, elements of the Special Warfare Team (SWAT), Regional Mobile Group and Nestlé security guards. The complaint was brought on by two incidents of violence against their picket line on June 23 and June 24.

According to PAMANTIK (Pagkakaisa ng mga Manggagawa sa Timog Katagalugan), members of the United Filipino Employees Drug, Food and Allied Services-KMU were having a general meeting when they were assaulted by police, security guards and other paid goons. Stones, wood and tear gas grenades rained over them and water cannons were used to bomb the 500 strikers holding a meeting.

More than 30 strikers were wounded and taken to hospital as a result of the three-hour clash between the strikers and men on the imperialist company's payroll.

Strike at Bondex Garments and Alsons victorious

Over 100 strikers of Bondex Garments Corporation at the Export Processing Zone in Angeles, Pampanga prevailed over management's attempt to remove officials and members of their union.

The Bondex workers' week-long strike was supported by more than 400 workers from their sister company Goldon Garments Factory. Bondex and Goldon now have a joint union and negotiations have begun for a new Collective Bargaining Agreement for Goldon workers.

Meanwhile, in Cagayan de Oro, 81 workers of Alcantara & Sons (Alsons) have been reinstated after a five-year wait for justice. The National Labor Relations Council Fifth Division ordered Alsons to reinstate the workers and to pay their cumulative backpay now worth P17 million. Prior to this, the workers lost their jobs after the NLRC declared the strike which they launched on August 23, 1998 illegal. Alsons is one of the biggest companies in the Philippines producing wood products.

Mountaineer kidnapped by RPA-ABB

The kidnap-murder by the counterrevolutionary and bandit RPA-ABB group of a mountaineer missing since February was bared this July. Leovic Gutierez, a mountaineer, was with eleven others who climbed Mt Madia-as in Culasi, Antique on February 16 when he was kidnapped by elements of the RPA-ABB under Daniel Batoy (alias Mokong and Arlene). Batoy heads the RPA-ABB in Panay.

According to the account of Joshue Alejo, one of the mountaineers' guides, the RPA-ABB conspired with him to kidnap Gutierez and demand ransom for his freedom. RPA-ABB elements even pretended to join Philippine Army troops in search of Gutierez from March to June. Alejo also said that he was brought by the RPA-ABB to Barangay Monlaque, Ibajay, Aklan on June 1 and tortured to make him admit that he was the one who "killed Gutierez and knows where he was buried."

In a statement to the media, Julian Paisano, spokesperson of the Coronacion "Waling-Waling" Chiva Command of the NPA-Panay, said that the RPA-ABB may have killed Gutierez to cover up their crime.